(b) the reasons for not moving out stocks elsewhere in the country with a view to procure further stock of rice from the summer crop of farmers; and

(c) the awareness of Government about widespread distress, sale by farmers in Orissa and the steps taken and proposed to be taken by Government to alleviate such distress?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Stock of rice held by FCI in their godowns in Orissa as on 1st June 2009 and 1st July, 2009 were 5.98 lakh tonnes and 6.30 lakh tonnes respectively.

(b) There has been record procurement of wheat and rice in the country during Rabi Marketing Season 2009-10 and Kharif Marketing Season 2008-09 and FCI is facing shortage of storage space in various States. Due to increased procurement of boiled rice in Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal, there is shortage of storage capacity.

(c) There is no report of distress sale of paddy. In order to ensure Minimum Support Price (MSP) to farmers in Orissa, a schedule for accepting 6 lakh tones of rice (during the period August'09—November'09) by FCI has been worked out in consultation with the State Government and FCI has been advised to plan movement of rice out of Orissa accordingly.

Shortage of foodgrains under PDS in Assam

2315. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a shortage of availability of foodgrains under Public Distribution System in Assam;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to improve the situation;

(c) the steps taken in connection with malpractices/misappropriation/selling/diverting the PDS items like wheat, rice in the open market during last three years in Assam along with the details thereof; and

(d) what steps have been taken to strengthen the PDS?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) The Central Government makes allocation of foodgrains to States/UTs, including the State of Assam, under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) @ 35 kgs. per family per month for all Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families, on the basis of ration cards issued by the States/UTs or the number of households on the basis of poverty estimates of Planning Commission for 1993-94 and population projection of Registrar General of India as on 01.03.2000, *whichever is less*. Full allocations are made @ 35 kg per family per month under BPL/AAY categories.

The allocations for APL category are made depending upon the availability of stock of foodgrains in Central Pool and the past offtake by States. Presently, allocations to the State are around 20 kg. per APL family per month.

However, the State Government has issued BPL and APL ration cards in excess of estimated numbers of such families.

The State Government has also allocated 25,000 tons of rice at economic cost during July, 2009 for flood relief.

The allocation of foodgrains for all the three categories of BPL, AAY and APL under TPDS to all States/UTs, including Assam, for the year 2009-10 have already been issued. Further, distribution within the State of the foodgrains allocated by Central Government under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is the responsibility of the State Government.

Complaints about malpractices in TPDS received from time to time are sent to concerned State/UT Governments, including Assam Government for enquiry and appropriate action under the law.

Government has taken a series of measures and urged State/UT Governments to streamline TPDS by:—

(i) continuous review of lists of BPL and AAY families and ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at fair price shops;

(ii) ensuring greater transparency in functioning of TPDS;

(iii) improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels;

(iv) introduction of new technologies such as Computerization of TPDS operations at various levels, smart card based delivery of essential commodities; and

(v) getting functioning of TPDS periodically evaluated.

The State Government has reported following steps to stop malpractices and misappropriation of PDS items like rice and wheat:—

(i) Constitution of Vigilance and Monitoring Committees from F.P. Shops level to District level.

(ii) An enquiry has been ordered into the alleged malpractices and misappropriation of TPDS items in three Upper Assam Districts namely Golaghat, Jorhat and Sivasagar and to take legal action as per law.

(iii) District and Sub-Divisional authorities have been directed to conduct enquiry/investigations to detect anomalies/diversions/leakage etc., of TPDS items distributed through TPDS network ana* verification of ration cards.

(iv) District Police Authorities have also been asked to take action as empowered under Clause 30 and Clause 31 of the Assam Trade Article (License and Control) Order, 1982 and the Assam Public Distribution of Articles Order, 1982.

(v) State Government has reconstituted the Advisory Board under Section 9(I) of the Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 to take up the cases under the said Act.

Augmenting the public stocks of imported cooking oil

2316. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plans to augment its public stock of imported cooking oil in view of possible deficient monsoon affecting oil seeds production;

(b) whether Government has asked the State owned trading companies to import up to one million tonnes of edible oil over the next one year; and

(c) whether despite being a consumer friendly move to help BPL families to tide over the current inflation of food items, it would also depress margins for large private sector players in edible oil business?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) No, Sir. The Government does not maintain a public stock of edible oil.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Shortage of godowns of FCI in Tamil Nadu

2317. SHRI N. BALAGANGA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the shortage of storage godowns of the Food Corporation of India in Tamil Nadu; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to meet the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir. As on 30.6.2009, in Tamil Nadu, FCI is having total storage capacity of 9.57 Lac MT (Owned and Hired/Covered and CAP) against the total quantity of foodgrains stored therein of 9.68 Lac MT with the utilization of 101%.

(b) In order to overcome the shortage of space, the following steps have been taken to meet the shortage of storage capacity:—

(i) In Tamil Nadu, FCI has identified 18 locations to create additional capacity of 3.20 Lac MT through the Scheme for construction of godowns under which FCI is offering five year guarantee.

(ii) Further the General Manager (Regions) have been fully authorized to hire additional storage capacity from CWC/SWCs/State Agencies and Private Parties as per requirement.